Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Predictive Analysis for Naval Deployment Activities (PANDA)

BAA 05-44

14 September 2005

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q1. Is part of the BTI at the non-SCI level (I have a SBI but no current SCI billet)? Can someone with just a Secret clearance attend the BTI? If not, can someone with a Top Secret/SCI attend the BTI?

A1. The morning session of the BTI will focus on administrative information and will be unclassified; the afternoon session will focus on technical/system/data information and will be classified SECRET/SCI. Due to restrictions at the BTI facility, you must have an active TOP SECRET/SCI clearance to attend ANY portion of the BTI. Individuals who do not have a TOP SECRET/SCI clearance will not be allowed to attend the BTI.

Instructions for passing SCI visit requests to DARPA for the PANDA BTI are available by following the PANDA BTI registration link at: http://www.tfims.darpa.mil/bti/industryeventlist.asp.

All pertinent information and materials presented at the unclassified morning session will be made available on the PANDA BAA homepage http://dtsn.darpa.mil/IXO/solicitations/PANDA/index.htm.

Q2. I am unclear on the security clearance level required for: a) to submit a proposal, and b) to attend the BTI. At one point the solicitation states: "The BTI will be classified SECRET/SCI", but later it states, "DARPA is expecting to receive CLASSIFIED and UNCLASSIFIED proposal submissions for this effort", and later still, it states "All pertinent information and materials presented at the UNCLASSIFIED session of the PANDA BTI will be made available at http://dtsn.darpa.mil/IXO/solicitations/PANDA/index.htm."

A2. RE BTI attendance requirements: see (A1).

RE release of pertinent unclassified information from the BTI: see (A1).

RE proposal submission: Offerors may submit unclassified or classified proposals in accordance with the instructions provided in Section B.4 of BAA-05-44 Proposal Information Package (PIP). The level of clearances (facility and personnel) should be commensurate with the proposed work, as indicated in Section B.4.

Q3. We are interested in the PANDA BAA. But we would like to clarify whether an educational institute like us could participate without getting involved in anything that requires clearances, ITAR or prohibition of foreign nationals?

Assuming we're only submitting proposal for TD areas, and we are not intended to use any unclassified data, are we okay to have people without clearance or foreign nationals working on our team?

A3.   As stated in the PANDA BAA05-44 Proposer's Information Package (PIP), PANDA system and technology Go/No-Go evaluations shall be conducted against classified data. The detailed system and technology evaluation results may or may not be classified; hence, it is possible that offerors who do not have access to classified data, will not be able to learn the detailed results of the official evaluation of their technology.

DARPA is interested in novel research approaches. Technology evaluation against synthetic data or real data from an analogous problem area will be considered; however, evaluation against other data sources (synthetic or real) is not sufficient to satisfy the Go/No-Go criteria. Offerors who do not have the ability to access, store, and/or generate classified data should include a plan for how their technology will be evaluated against classified data and how they will incorporate these evaluation results into future development. Possible options include, but are not limited to, teaming with organizations that have the ability to work with classified data, and/or providing your technology to the SEI, PE, and/or another TD contractor, along with sufficient training and documentation so that the receiving party can interpret the results and modify the algorithm and/or software as necessary.

At this time, there are no ITAR or foreign national participation restrictions on general PANDA technology research and development. Access to classified information is, of course, restricted to U.S. citizens with the appropriate clearances and need-to-know. In any event, results from the classified PANDA system and technology evaluations will be deemed classified until reviewed by the PANDA program manager. Results from the classified evaluations that are subsequently deemed unclassified, may be still be subject to ITAR and other restrictions. It is feasible that technology developed under this program will later be subject to ITAR and other restrictions.

Q4.   The BAA states the following, just after listing the primary technical requirements:

"In addition to the four technical components listed above, this effort requires support for activities related to System Engineering and Integration (SEI) and Performance Evaluation (PE)."

We are interested in proposing to support the Performance Evaluation function, but it is not clear how to respond if you have a capability to perform this role. We could attempt a proposal that addresses what we would believe to be the PE requirements associated with each technical area but thought first to inquire for some guidance on this question.

Bottom line: we are seeking how-to-propose guidance for the PE role on this BAA.

A4.   See the PIP, particularly sections B.4, D.2.6, E.6, F.2, and G.2.4.

DARPA is interested in evaluating system level performance, as well as individual technology/component performance. As indicated in the PIP, PE

offerors should address all areas of evaluation. Evaluations against the Go/No-Go criteria are expected to occur at a government furnished facility located in the Denver area and the PE contractor shall provide continuous on-site support of up to one person at that facility throughout the life of the program. The PE contractor must already possess the ability to access, store, and generate SCI data.

Q5. Are "technology Development" contractors expected to address all the areas identified in D.1.4; or can one propose only on a single technology?

A5. TD offerors may submit proposals covering one or more of the technology topics or components described in D.1.4. All TD proposals should address how the proposed technology (or technologies) fit into the PANDA system vision.

Q6. Is there a notional range of award size?

A6. No. DARPA has specified the high-level objectives and phasing. It is up to each offeror to propose an appropriate collection of technologies, plan (with schedules and intermediate milestones), and level of effort to achieve the high-level objectives and proposed capabilities.

Q7. For proposals submitted under Technology Development (TD): Are end-to-end system proposals preferred over technology proposals with specific focus areas?

A7. No. See A5. Note, TD proposals covering more than one technology topic should balance technical breadth and depth. TD proposals should provide enough technical detail to allow DARPA to evaluate the proposed approach as it relates to each technology topic.

Q8. Regarding the Briefing to Industry, the PIP states "Due to space limitations, attendance will be limited to one person per organization; but if space permits, the government may elect to allow additional attendees." When will a decision allowing additional attendees from the same organization be made?

A8. As of 9 September 2005, there are 20 spaces remaining for the BTI. Subject to space availability, organizations may register up to two attendees (i.e., one additional attendee) for the Briefing to Industry. See the PIP and A1 above for clearance requirements.

Q9. I represent a group of researchers at [a U.S. University], interested in submitting a proposal to DARPA's BAA05-44 at the UNCLASSIFIED level. I would like to know whether foreign nationals from countries in the U.S. Department of Commerce's country group B will be able to participate in the project, in case it is approved.

A9. See A3, particularly the last paragraph.

Q10. To what extent [do] you anticipate that the classification guidelines of PANDA will restrict the ability of participants to publish results of their work?

A10. Publication and release of classified materials accessed and/or generated under the PANDA program will be restricted in accordance with standard guidelines, including those of the data owners (i.e., our service and intelligence community partners). For more detail, see A3 above and the PANDA Security Classification Guideline (DARPA-CG-364). Section B.4 of the PIP contains instructions on obtaining DARPA-CG-364.

Q11. Do you prefer separate proposals for each of the 4 technology components or combination(s)?

A11. See A5 and A7.

Q12. Will there be a COI between the SEI and the technology developers or can organizations be involved in both?

A12. See section D.2.1 of the PIP.

Q13. What is the budget for the program?

A13. DARPA has not established a budget for the PANDA program.

Q14. Will all those executing the PANDA program effort ultimately be required to have SCI clearances or can universities be involved in unclassified research aspects of the program?

A14. See A3.

Q15. May foreign nationals participate in PANDA?

A15. See A3.

Q16. Section G.2.4 of the PIP, the second to the last paragraph says "Please indicate options with and without government support."

Is this intended for PE contractors only? Won't the PE contractor be providing this support to the technology component developers anyway?

A16. This paragraph is intended for the SEI and PE contractors. It is expected that the SEI and PE contractors will have facilities for storing and generating SCI data, and conducting engineering and integration activities and dry run experimentation prior to insertion in a government-owned classified facility; the requirements on those facilities may be affected by the availability of government provided facilities to conduct on-going experimentation, annual evaluations, and full-up integration with government-provided data sources. This paragraph of the

PIP should be amended to read:

Note for SEI and PE offerors: The government is currently in ongoing discussions with one or more federal agencies to possibly provide experimentation support in the form of facilities, equipment, subject matter experts, experiment and simulation operations, experiment design and control, experiment data collection and analysis, and simulation modification. Please indicate options with and without government support. For example, providing a facility for experimentation at a contractor facility versus a government facility; provide computer workstations (hardware, software, and support) for experimentation at a contractor facility versus a government facility; etc. Please indicate as many options as possible. These options are to be priced in the Cost Proposal.